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First Annual Report

TO THE

CORPORATION AND MEMBERS

OF THE

American Society

FOR THE

Extension of University Teaching.

BY

EDMUND J. JAMES, Ph.D.,

President of the Society.

PHILADELPHIA:

1803.

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REPORT
TO THE
CORPORATION AND MEMBERS
OF THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY
FOR THE
EXTENSION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING.

In submitting to your consideration my first annual report it will not be out of place to call attention to the purpose for which our Society exists, and the various methods which we have adopted in order to realize that purpose as fully as possible. The object of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching is described in our charter to be the promotion of the Extension of University Teaching. The implication is that whatever methods are efficient and legitimate shall be used to the full extent at the disposal of the Society in the furtherance of the cause. The lines along which our organization has so far been working may be described in a general way under six heads.

It was felt by the Society at the very beginning of its work that one of the methods by which it could most efficiently advance the cause was the creation of a technical literature : that is, a series of papers discussing in a systematic way and in considerable detail, all the elements peculiar to this educational movement. It should not merely content itself with setting forth the facts in regard to what was actually done by different men at different places, but it should raise the question as to efficiency in regard to each one of the methods heretofore adopted, and investigate as far as possible the results attending any variation in plans and methods. One

of the serious difficulties meeting those college and university men who wish to do efficient work in University Extension, is that of informing themselves speedily and thoroughly as to all the special and technical points of the work. It was believed that the existence of a technical literature which should incorporate the experience of our own, and of various other organizations in this field, would be of great assistance to such persons as wished to prepare themselves for efficient work along these lines. We felt not only that this was absolutely necessary in order to obtain the highest efficiency in the courses given under our own immediate supervision, but that it would be of great advantage to every one else engaged in this field, whether in this country, or abroad: and that in this way we should, therefore, be carrying out one of the fundamental objects of our Society.

We think it is not too much to say that, everything considered, a good start has been made in the direction of creating such a technical literature. Careful papers have been prepared upon the function and methods of University Extension work, upon the University Extension lecturer, what he should do and what he should be, upon the place and form of the class, upon the character, form and content of the syllabus, upon the place of the examination in this scheme of instruction, upon the duties and organization of local committees, upon the most efficient methods of stimulating study on the part of University Extension students, etc., etc.; taking up one after another, and as fully as circumstances permitted, the investigation of each of the difficult questions of policy relating to this subject.

That the result accomplished along this line has been felt to be a service by others than those engaged in our own work, is amply evidenced by the fact that we have a continued call for the papers and discussions upon these subjects which have been published by the Society, and that from every State in the Union we have received requests to send copies of such documents. We hope to continue this particular work and carry it on with even more fulness and in more detail in the future than in the past. The Society has

published a "Handbook of University Extension" made up of the first twelve numbers of its journal, and which has been pronounced by competent experts to be the best contribution to the literature of University Extension work which has been made up to the present. The reports of the Conferences, which will be mentioned in another connection, ought also to be noted here; as the report of the first National Conference on University Extension contained a unique collection of papers bearing upon all the various phases of this subject, and which are of special interest to those engaged in the conduct of this work throughout the world. Mr. Michael E. Sadler, the well-known English Extension lecturer, declared this report of the first Conference to have reached the 'high water mark' of excellence in Extension literature. This sort of work is, of course, expensive but it is absolutely necessary to the permanency and efficiency of the movement.

Another way in which the Society has tried to further the progress of University Extension teaching has been the publication of a monthly journal, to serve as the organ of the movement in this country. It has only to a limited extent undertaken to make this publication a bulletin or a newspaper, but it has made a special effort to agitate the fundamental questions of policy relating to the movement, and secure their helpful, thorough and wide-spread discussion in this periodical. The regular appearance of the journal has served to call the attention of people interested in University Extension to the fact that the movement is progressive and that the difficult questions, which it must solve if it is to be permanent, are receiving that continued and careful attention which is absolutely necessary to their rapid and successful solution. The journal has not only been the medium for the publication of much of the technical literature spoken of above, but in its column of Notes, it has also served to chronicle the progress of the movement in this country and abroad in such a way as to render it easy for any one who desired to know of its success and growth, to inform himself upon the matter.

Closely related to these two methods of work is a third: the organization of the National Conference of workers in the University Extension field to discuss the subjects relating to the movement. Two of these Conferences have been held in Philadelphia. Your Society has every reason to congratulate itself upon the success which has attended these Conferences; whether we look at them as evidences of the growing interest in University Extension, or as opportunities for the interchange of opinions and experience on the part of the workers in this field in such a way as to render their respective efforts more efficient than before, or whether we look upon them as the occasion of the publication of contributions to the technical literature which was mentioned above. This particular service of the Society has received ample recognition both here and abroad, and a comprehensive article describing the progress of the University Extension movement in the United States within the last two years, taking as its starting point the Conference held in December, 1892, appeared in the January number of the *Review of Reviews*. In this article full recognition of the service which your Society has rendered and is rendering the cause of University Extension in America is given. On the same occasion a number of the most prominent weekly newspapers, both secular and religious, evidenced their continued interest in the subject and their appreciation of its importance either by carefully written reports or editorial articles upon the subject.

Not the least of the services which your Society has rendered the cause at large, in pursuance of its general function of promoting the cause of University Extension throughout the country, is to be found in the publication of a number of carefully prepared circulars describing the scope and function of the movement, giving directions to lecturers how to take it up and organize it, to local committees, to communities, how they might receive the advantages of the movement, etc. These circulars, in the hands of an advocate of the movement, have proved to be one of the most powerful means of promoting general interest in the cause of

University Extension throughout the country. They have not been published for free distribution, but are sold at a nominal price; and how wide the demand for them is you will appreciate when you know that during the last year circulars of this sort were called for in large numbers, and by people in every part of the United States.

One of the most important functions which your Society can perform is that of making it possible for those few persons in every community who are interested in the cause of higher education, to set in motion the agencies by which this new impulse can come into their lives. It is not claiming too much to say that any intelligent person interested in securing a higher educational force at work in his community, finds it much easier to do this to-day than three years ago, owing to the fact that we have incorporated and formulated our experience in a concrete way, so that he can take it up, and acting in accordance with our directions can start this movement in his vicinity. That this is so is evidenced by the large number of villages where it has been actually done.

Another important function which your Society has performed for this cause has been the organization of a centre for the study and investigation of University Extension problems. This was done during the last year under the name of the University Extension Seminary for the training of University Extension lecturers. We have carried on since the first of October a series of courses, in rooms granted us by the University of Pennsylvania, upon the various aspects of the University Extension movement and upon the general educational forces of this country in their relation to this movement. It has been one of the most satisfactory signs of the beneficial influence of this work that we found it possible to obtain the assistance of a number of gentlemen in different institutions, whose interest in the work was so great that they have contributed freely of their time and effort to make this experiment a success. Ten students entered upon the systematic study of University Extension problems in this Seminary at the beginning of this year.

They were mostly persons carrying on their graduate studies but who had become interested in the general subject, and were willing to give a considerable portion of their time to its investigation and discussion. We have utilized in the Seminary the services of our own staff lecturers, and have been greatly assisted in this work by President DeGarmo of Swarthmore College, President Sharpless of Haverford College, and Professor Fullerton, of the University of Pennsylvania. During the next half year we expect to receive assistance from Professor Patten, of the University of Pennsylvania ; Professor Henderson, of the Manual Training School in Philadelphia ; Professor Huling, of the New Bedford, Mass., High School ; Superintendent Brooks, of Philadelphia ; President MacAlister, of the Drexel Institute, and Dr. William T. Harris, United States Commissioner of Education. The work this year has been given by a number of gentlemen without any pecuniary remuneration whatever, and one or two of them are willing to continue that another year. But it is perfectly plain that we cannot expect that systematic and regular attention for the work of the Seminary, which is necessary in order to make it work out its highest results, unless we can afford to offer some pecuniary return.

We feel that the existence of this Seminary as a school for the systematic study of the problems relating to our work is very essential to secure the highest results. The question has been raised, why is it necessary to have any such institute at all? Are not college and university men amply able to take part in the work of University Extension teaching without any of this systematic study and training? In answer to this it may be said that it can hardly be doubted that every college and university man who enters upon this work would be the better for having studied and investigated the problems connected with it ; that up to the present no opportunity to do this has been offered, and that we believe that with the offering of the opportunity will come the utilization of it on the part of many men whose efficiency will, thereby, be immensely increased. Moreover, it is quite desirable in the interest of the movement that there

should be at different places in this country a number of men who, by reason of the special attention and thought which they have given to this work and its organization, should be able to assist our colleges and universities in establishing and maintaining this work in the most efficient manner. It is particularly for such men as are willing to give more of their time and attention to this subject than the ordinary college professor or instructor, that the existence of this Seminary is especially desirable. A further word will be said about this in another connection.

Finally, in the task of promoting the Extension of University teaching your Society has been engaged in the concrete experiment of conducting courses under its immediate auspices in and about Philadelphia. During the last year 120 such courses have been given under its auspices, attended on the average by 190 people. This represents, therefore, over 700 lectures given upon various topics of University Extension teaching, each of which was attended by 190 people, making a total attendance of 22,800. These courses have been given in Philadelphia and its suburbs, in Wilmington, Reading, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Chambersburg, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Trenton, Bridgeton, Chester, West Chester, Media and in other towns, aggregating some sixty in number. They have been given by professors and instructors in the University of Pennsylvania, Haverford, Swarthmore, Bryn Mawr Colleges, Lehigh, Lafayette, Princeton and Bucknell Universities. The full details of the work will appear in the secretary's report, which will be printed in the report of the proceedings of the Second National Conference on University Extension.

To appreciate the importance of a movement like this to the communities in which these have taken place would be difficult. From the letters which have been received in the office from local committees, from students, from the citizens of the communities in which they have been given, we may infer that the University Extension work has brought a new spirit and energy into the entire educational life of the community. The advantages of these University Extension

lectures we cannot stop to sum up here, and the claims that are made for them you are familiar with, and I think that our experience justifies on the whole the reasonable claims made by its advocates.

It is sometimes said that the University Extension movement is intended only for workingmen, for mechanics, for men who labor with their hands and for daily wages, and that unless it can be shown that the University Extension lecture courses have reached such people, the movement has no legitimate claim for support. While we should fully agree with the statement that the University Extension movement ought to reach the mechanics and the day laborers and ought to become a part of their lives, and while we have the desire to make it do so and the determination to realize this end as soon as may be, it cannot be conceded that the University Extension movement is for these classes alone. The general object of University Extension work has been formulated in many different ways, and perhaps it would be impossible to get any one formulation which would include all the varied aspects of this many-sided work. But certainly one of the happiest formulations is that given us by the English Extension workers in the statement that the object of the University Extension movement is to make education a serious business of life, to put it into the category of human existence by the side of religion, of business, of amusement, of politics; and to preach in season and out of season the doctrine that every citizen in the community should make education one of his permanent interests. We mean this in two senses, both in the subjective and in the objective sense, in that the individual should consider it as a duty and a privilege to carry on the process of self-education in a systematic and regular way as continuously as he carries on his business, as he carries on his religion, as he carries on his amusements. This message University Extension has to bring to all classes, rich and poor alike. The mechanical classes are not by any means the only ones who need to have preached to them and kept before them their duty to carry out persistently and continuously a process of self-culture.

But this is not only true in the subjective but equally true in the objective sense. The higher educational interests of the community will never be adequately served, until the attention of the community can be directed continuously and powerfully to the importance of education in our national life. No opportunity has ever been offered in all history for preaching a sound, educational doctrine to the masses, whether rich or poor, as the University Extension movement has brought us. Courses of lectures on Shakespeare, on Hamlet, on Macbeth, etc., on Danté, on the Greek Classics, on the literature of the Bible, as they are given by Mr. Moulton, for example, or by Mr. Shaw, in the connection and in the way in which they manipulate the entire process, result in stirring up such an interest in education, both higher and lower, as cannot fail to redound to the benefits of education throughout the community. I have received letters particularly from the smaller towns in which Extension courses have been given, saying that the coming of a man like Mr. Edward T. Devine, though he lectured upon a subject which is not by any means popular, and indeed has the reputation of being dismal—Political Economy—that the coming of such a man into that community, though only for once in six consecutive weeks, marked a new era and epoch in the educational life of that place, and that when he left every educational influence for good found itself strengthened and benefited. The same thing is true of Mr. Rolfe. Now, if we could do nothing more in University Extension work than this, if we could do nothing more than keep in the field a number of men who would raise and intensify public interest in educational matters and guide it to intelligent action, our Society would perform a most valuable service which would fully justify its existence. This preaching of the importance of education, of the opportunities for work which the educational field offers, both to the layman and the expert, is something which would produce valuable results even if it should be confined exclusively, as of course it is not to be, to the comparatively well-to-do classes of the community.

Some one may object that people who are able to pay for lectures, if they wish them, can pay for them the prices that are necessary to secure them, and that there is no call, in any public interest, for us to support a movement by our contributions and work which has for its object the delivery of lecture-courses at smaller rates than the fees which would be necessary if no such organization were kept up.

University Extension work, however, is to be justified on the same ground that any other higher educational work is to be justified. No educational institution of high rank could be organized and supported entirely from the proceeds of fees, and yet we support our universities at which the sons of wealthy as well as of poor men find opportunities, for which they pay comparatively small sums of money, because we believe that it is a good thing to have such institutions in a community, and that it is a good thing to have the sons of wealthy people secure an education, even to a large extent at the expense of other wealthy people, or even at the expense of the community, rather than not have that education at all or the opportunity for it. So in this movement, we may keep up an organization and raise money for its support on the ground that it is serving a useful public purpose.

The work for the next year is promising and I wish to submit, very briefly, the lines along which we recommend that it shall be carried on. We propose to continue the journal; we propose to continue the University Extension Seminary, and carry on as we may be able the publication of circulars, and the preparation and publication of technical literature as circumstances may seem to make possible. It appears to us that the time has come to make a definite advance in the line of sequence of courses. We have made careful study, based both upon our own experience and that in England, and have come to the conclusion that sequence of studies is only to be obtained by offering to local centres what may be called, speaking roughly, a curriculum, a proposed order of subjects, or at least a proposed combination of subjects. At one time we attempted in a small way to

inaugurate this new mode. We found, however, that it was quite impossible owing to the fact that we could not secure from university and college men such definite assurances that they would prepare themselves to give certain courses, and hold themselves ready to give them at a certain time, as rendered likely the carrying out of such a scheme. We have come, therefore, to believe fully and thoroughly that in order to secure sequence of work, it will be necessary for the Society to establish a certain number of staff lectureships, and make arrangements with a certain number of lecturers to give us their entire time or at least a large part of it during the Extension season, and who will bind themselves to prepare courses upon definite subjects, and be ready to give them at the time that they may be called upon. The college and university men are quite willing to give a large number of courses, and, of course, we must rely upon them to do the bulk of the work. At the same time we must organize a supplementary force which shall be at our own disposal to fill out the gaps, to take the courses which university and college men cannot take, and to act as assistant lecturers and organizers in supervising and inspecting the character of the work done. We have had this last year two such staff lecturers, Mr. Edward T. Devine and Mr. Henry W. Rolfe. It is proposed to continue them during the next year and we recommend that we be authorized to make engagements with at least two or three other men who may also be known as staff lecturers, and who will give us their entire time.

It is felt that the Society, in order to render its educational work more efficient, should organize and conduct in this city during the summer for a period of four weeks, a University Extension summer meeting, especially for the benefit of those students who have taken the lecture courses and who desire to go on with some systematic study for a longer or shorter period. It is believed that a considerable number of students would attend such a meeting and that it would be found to be a most valuable means of maintaining the purely educational aspects of our work.

In closing this brief report permit me to say that I think the time has come to take up the question of the permanent endowment of the work of the Society. As the result of a study of this movement for several years, and especially of my experience as your organizing officer for two years, I am convinced that we have to do here with one of the most potent of educational forces. If we can give it firm standing room here in Philadelphia, I am sure that it is destined to affect in a most powerful and beneficent way our whole American system of education. But to do this, it is necessary to give it that character of permanence which even a small endowment would secure. Men of the necessary scholarship and character cannot be attracted to this work until it seems probable that it is to be reasonably permanent; nor can they be held when colleges and universities persuade them to leave it, unless they can look forward to probable permanence of position.

I firmly believe that a sum of \$200,000 devoted to this purpose would accomplish more for American education than an equal sum given to any other educational purpose now before the public.

The Preliminary Report of the Treasurer was sent to each member of the Corporation and to each of the guarantors. The final report will be submitted as soon as all the guarantors have paid their contributions and the bills have been audited and settled.

DECEMBER 31, 1892.



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